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BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

Application Number: 09/374,740
Filing Date: August 13, 1999
Appellant(s): AUSTIN ET AL.

Jeffrey C. Hood
For Appellant

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

This is in response to the appeal brief filed September 27, 2004.

(1) Real Party in Interest

A statement identifying the real party in interest is contained in the brief.

(2) Related Appeals and Interferences

A statement identifying the related appeals and interferences which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the decision in the pending appeal is contained in the brief.

(3) Status of Claims

The statement of the status of the claims contained in the brief is correct.

(4) Status of Amendments After Final

The appellant's statement of the status of amendments after final rejection contained in the brief is correct.

(5) Summary of Invention

The summary of invention contained in the brief is correct.

(6) Issues

The appellant's statement of the issues in the brief is correct.

(7) Grouping of Claims

Appellant's brief includes a statement that the claims do not stand or fall together and provides reasons as set forth in 37 CFR 1.192(c)(7) and (c)(8).

(8) Claims Appealed

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

(9) Prior Art of Record

6,047,332	VISWANATHAN ET AL.	4/2000
6,094,684	PALLMANN	7/2000

(10) Grounds of Rejection

The following ground(s) of rejection are applicable to the appealed claims:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

In considering claims 1, 16, 31, 43, and 48, Viswanathan discloses a computer-implemented method, system, and memory medium for enabling access to one or more hardware device data sources or targets (106, 112, 114, 116, 118, etc.) in a computer system (col. 8, lines 61-65), comprising:

means for automatically determining one or more data sources or targets connected to the computer (col. 8, line 60 – col. 9, line 2, wherein computer 202 uses global file system 206 to determine which sources or targets are connected to the computer);

means for automatically generating one or more logical names for each of the data sources or targets (col. 10, lines 1-3; col. 11, lines 37-38; col. 15, lines 10-22);

wherein each of the logical names is usable for configuring the respective source or target (i.e. the act of assigning the names configures the devices; see also, col. 11, lines 56-61).

However, the system taught by Viswanathan does not use the term "URL" (i.e. uniform resource locator) in describing the logical names. Applicant has argued that according to Applicant's specification, the term "URL" in the claims is limited to the URLs that are accessible on the Web – see Applicant's response filed on July 30, 2002, p. 6, lines 7-9. Thus, Examiner now interprets the term "URL" to mean an Internet URL. Viswanathan uses the term "identifier" and "globally unique logical name" for the devices (see Abstract; see col. 11, lines 30-38), and further describes the structure of such logical names as including a locator string, "/devices/hostid/..." (col. 14, lines 13-14, 50-60), but does not describe them as constituting Internet URLs.

Nonetheless, network access systems that use globally unique names to provide access to network devices, wherein the globally unique names are Internet URLs are well known, as evidenced by Pallmann. In a similar art, Pallmann discloses a data access system for accessing remote network devices that are addressed via globally unique names, wherein the unique names are Internet URLs (col. 8, lines 30-68, wherein HTTP over TCP/IP uses Internet URLs). Thus, given the teaching of Pallmann, a person having ordinary skill in the art would have readily recognized the desirability and advantages of replacing the globally unique logical names taught by Viswanathan with globally unique Internet URLs, so that users can access the devices taught by Viswanathan from anywhere in the world (see Pallmann, col. 9, lines 8-10, "enabl[ing] users to obtain data from and deliver to computers in locations across the Earth through the Internet"). Thus, it would have been obvious for the globally unique logical names taught by Viswanathan to comprise Internet URLs, as taught by Pallmann.

In considering claims 2, 17, 32, and 49, Viswanathan further discloses that the data sources and targets include addressable data sources and targets of a hardware device physically coupled to the computer system (col. 8, lines 61-65).

In considering claims 3 and 19, Viswanathan further discloses including configuration information in the logical names, wherein the configuration information is operable to be used for configuring the respective data source or target (col. 15, lines 10-22; col. 5, lines 54-62; col. 11, lines 57-65, wherein the configuration information is the assigned logical name itself, and wherein the name is used to configure – i.e. access and control – the source or target).

In considering claim 4, Viswanathan further discloses querying a database (DCS database) to obtain information regarding a data source or data target, and generating logical names based on the obtained information (col. 12, lines 36-41).

In considering claim 5, Viswanathan further discloses that the hardware devices are connected to the computer (col. 8, lines 61-65), wherein the automatically generating comprises:

querying a database to obtain device information regarding one or more of the hardware devices, wherein the querying includes determining the addressable data sources and targets of the device(s) (col. 12, lines 36-41; col. 11, lines 30-36); and

generating one or more logical names based on the device information and the addressable data sources and targets thus obtained (col. 11, lines 37-38). See also, col. 14, lines 20-24, and col. 15, lines 10-22, describing that the name is based on a device portion and a source/target portion.

In considering claim 6, Viswanathan further discloses the device information including device configuration information, wherein the generating comprises including device configuration information in one or more logical names identifying hardware device data sources or targets (col. 11, lines 57-59; col. 7, lines 40-50).

In considering claims 7, 18, 47, and 50, although the system taught by Viswanathan and Pallmann discloses substantial features of the claimed invention, it fails to disclose that the hardware devices may include one of DAQ, GPIB, VXI, PXI, and serial devices. Nonetheless, applicant's admission of the prior art discloses that inputting and outputting information to these devices is well known (see specification, p. 2, line 29 – p. 3, line 1). Viswanathan further discloses the use of printer devices, communication devices, storage devices, and other types of devices (see Fig. 5). Thus, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to include any devices in the URL creation system taught by Viswanathan and Pallmann, so that all new devices connected to the computer can be accessed from a remote location.

In considering claim 8, although the teaching of Viswanathan and Pallmann discloses substantial features of the claimed invention including querying a database to obtain device information for naming devices (col. 7, lines 40-50), it fails to disclose the use of two separate databases, one for querying information regarding a first device, and another for querying information regarding a second device. Nonetheless, the use of two separate databases instead of one single database is a matter of preference and/or semantics. For instance, any database can be broken into multiple databases by simply breaking it into multiple portions according to any criteria. It could then be considered separate databases, even though taken as a whole it still constitutes a single database. Thus, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to use two separate databases – one which includes information of the first device, and another that includes information of the second device – instead of one large central database, because employing two smaller databases could significantly reduce the amount of time necessary to retrieve data from the databases, thereby creating a faster, and more efficient system.

In considering claim 9, Viswanathan further discloses connecting a new device to the computer (col. 10, lines 4-5), wherein said querying comprises obtaining device information regarding the new device, wherein the querying includes determining the addressable data sources and targets of the new device, and wherein the logical names include one or more logical names for one or more addressable data sources and targets of the new device (col. 9, line 66 – col. 10, line 12).

In considering claim 10, both Viswanathan and Pallmann further teach that the global unique logical names are operable to be included in an application program for reading data from or writing data to a data target (Viswanathan, col. 11, lines 37-38, 46-48, wherein using a "globally unique logical name," "an application on any node can employ the file system to view and access all of the devices on the cluster;" Pallmann, col. 8, lines 30-49, wherein a user enters an HTTP command (which inherently consists of entry of a URL into a browser or other application) to access the remote data source or target).

In considering claims 11, 29, 33, and 56 both Viswanathan and Pallmann further teach providing one or more of the logical names/URLs to an application program, wherein the application program is operable to access the data source or data target identified by the logical name/URL (Viswanathan, col. 11, lines 37-38, 46-48; Pallmann, col. 8, lines 30-49).

In considering claims 12, 30, 34, and 57, Pallmann further discloses a data socket client, wherein the data socket client uses the URL to connect to the data source or target identified by the URL and read data from it or write data to it (col. 8, lines 30-49, wherein a data socket is inherent in using a browser to access a target or source via entry of http commands).

In considering claim 13, the combined system of Viswanathan and Pallmann further discloses integrating the logical names/URLs within the computer operating system, wherein the logical names/URLs are accessible via a user interface (see Viswanathan, col. 11, lines 46-48 describing an application program being used to access the named devices; Pallmann, col. 9, describing the use of browsers to allow entry of particular URLs).

In considering claim 14, the combined system of Viswanathan and Pallmann further discloses that the logical names/URLs are operable to be provided to application programs via said user interface (i.e. the users may access a target or source by entering the name/URL into an application, Viswanathan, col. 11, lines 46-48; Pallmann, col. 8, lines 30-49, col. 9).

In considering claim 15, the combined system of Viswanathan and Pallmann further discloses editing the logical names/URLs using said user interface (a user can enter the name/URL to access a device and thus can edit the existing name/URL in the interface).

In considering claims 20 and 51, Viswanathan further discloses one or more plug-in modules (link generator) comprised in the memory of the computer system, wherein the plug-in modules interface with the logical name generation manager,

wherein each plug-in module is capable of automatically generating logical names to reference a particular type or class or data source or target (col. 10, lines 9-12).

In considering claim 21, Viswanathan further discloses one or more hardware devices connected to the computer system (col. 8, lines 61-65), wherein one or more of the plug-in modules is capable of automatically generating logical names to reference data sources or targets of a particular type or class of hardware device (col. 10, lines 9-12).

In considering claim 22, Viswanathan further discloses one or more databases which each store information regarding a particular type or class of data source or target (col. 12, lines 36-41; col. 16, lines 4-5, "class-based naming system"), wherein the information includes information regarding the locations or addresses of one or more data sources or targets connected to the computer (col. 12, lines 36-50; col. 11, lines 30-35).

In considering claim 23, Viswanathan further discloses that database information includes configuration information for one or more data sources or targets connected to the computer (col. 11, lines 56-61).

Claim 24 contains no further limitations over claims 21 and 22 combined, and is thus rejected for the same reasons stated with regard to claims 21 and 22.

Claim 25 contains the same limitations as claim 23, and is thus rejected for the same reasons stated with regard to claim 23.

Claim 26 contains the same limitations as claims 20 and 22 combined, and is thus rejected for the same reasons stated with regard to claims 20 and 22. Claim 26 additionally states that the plug-in module obtains information from the database to obtain class or type information. Viswanathan further discloses this on col. 7, lines 40-50 ("the DDI generates the globally unique identifier, the logical name, and the physical name for each logical device based on the assistance of the DCS, which, using the DCS database, generates the global minor numbers for each of the devices on behalf of the DDI").

Claim 27 contains the same limitations as claims 20, 21, and 22 combined, and is thus rejected for the same reasons stated with regard to claims 20, 21, and 22. Claim 27 additionally states that the plug-in module obtains information from the database to obtain class or type information. Viswanathan further discloses this on col. 7, lines 40-50 ("the DDI generates the globally unique identifier, the logical name, and the physical name for each logical device based on the assistance of the DCS, which, using the DCS database, generates the global minor numbers for each of the devices on behalf of the DDI").

In considering claim 28, the combined system of Viswanathan and Pallmann further discloses editing the logical names/URLs using an executable program (a user can enter the URL to access a device and thus can edit the existing URL in the interface; Pallmann, col. 9, describing entering the URLs into a browser). Viswanathan further discloses that the logical name includes configuration information (Viswanathan, col. 11, lines 57-59, wherein the configuration information is used to create the logical name).

In considering claims 36 and 45, Viswanathan further discloses that a device type of the target or source is automatically determined, and that the logical name is automatically formed based on a device type (col. 4, lines 54-60, wherein the link generator generates a logical name based on the device characteristics).

In considering claim 37, Viswanathan further discloses determining a first device type of a first data source of the one or more data sources or targets, and automatically determining a first template for the first data source based on the first device type, and automatically generating a first logical name based on the first template (col. 15, line 40 – col. 16, line 12).

In considering claim 38, Viswanathan discloses automatically determining a device type of the first data source (col. 10, lines 10-12), automatically determining a first template for the first data source based on the device type (col. 10, lines 17-20,

"DSOs"), and automatically determining a first plug-in module ("link generator") for the first data source based on the first device type (col. 10, lines 10-12), wherein the first plug-in module automatically generates a first logical name from the first data source based on the template (col. 10, lines 12-16).

In considering claim 39, claim 39 contains the same limitations as claims 31 and 36, and adds that the sources and targets are hardware devices. Viswanathan further discloses that the sources and targets are hardware devices, and is thus rejected for the same reasons as stated previously.

In considering claims 40 and 46, Viswanathan further discloses that the sources and targets include hardware devices physically coupled to the computer, automatically identifying the hardware devices, querying a database to discover information about the hardware devices (i.e. that it is a SCSI disk drive), and automatically generating a logical name for each of the hardware devices based on the obtained information (col. 10, lines 1-15; col. 11, lines 26-65 describing the process of naming devices based on information culled from the device).

In considering claim 44, Viswanathan further discloses determining a first hardware device having a plurality of channels, and automatically generating logical names for the each of the plurality of data channels (col. 14, lines 30-67, wherein different "slices" of the SCSI disk are given different logical names).

In considering claim 41, as discussed with respect to claim 44, Viswanathan further discloses determining a first hardware device having a plurality of channels, and automatically generating logical names for the each of the plurality of data channels (col. 14, lines 30-67, wherein different "slices" of the SCSI disk are given different logical names). However, Viswanathan does not disclose that the physical devices are data acquisition devices. Nonetheless, applicant's admission of the prior art discloses that inputting and outputting information to a data acquisition device is well known (see specification, p. 2, line 29 – p. 3, line 1). Viswanathan further discloses the use of printer devices, communication devices, storage devices, and other types of devices (see Fig. 5). Thus, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to include any devices in the URL creation system taught by Viswanathan and Pallmann, so that all new devices connected to the computer can be accessed from a remote location.

In considering claim 42, Viswanathan further discloses that the obtained information specifies characteristics (i.e. physical name, address, etc.) of the channel of the physical device (col. 14, lines 12-35), wherein automatically generating comprises including information regarding the characteristics in the logical name for each channel (col. 14, lines 36-67, wherein "the logical names map to device physical names").

In considering claim 52, Viswanathan further discloses one or more databases which each store information regarding a particular type or class of data source or target, wherein said information includes information regarding the locations of one or more data sources or targets connected to the computer (i.e. physical names, describing type and location of the hardware; col. 10, lines 1-14).

In considering claim 53, Viswanathan further discloses that the database information includes configuration information for one or more data sources or targets connected to the computer (col. 10, lines 43-46).

In considering claim 54, claim 54 contains substantially the same limitations as claims 51 and 52, and is thus rejected for the same reasons stated previously.

In considering claim 55, claim 55 contains substantially the same limitations as claims 49, 51, and 52, and is thus rejected for the same reasons stated previously.

(11) Response to Argument

The following is a response to each of Applicant's arguments as presented in the Appeal Brief:

1. With regard to claims 1, 2, 4, 10, 11, 16, 17, 20, 21, 29, 31-33, 36-39, 43, 45, 48, 49, 51, 52, and 54-56, Applicant argues that the Viswanathan and Pallmann references cannot be combined in the manner proposed by the Examiner because Viswanathan

"relates generally to systems and methods that provide device access through a file system, and particularly, to systems and methods for rendering devices on a cluster globally visible." Applicant therefore believes that Viswanathan's cluster system with access to a global file system is confined to a single operating system, and therefore cannot be extended to the global cluster of computers that constitute the Internet. To support this, Applicant explains that "the many computers connected to the Internet that either are not a part of the cluster 201, do not have access to the global file system 206, and/or do not execute the modified operating system kernel 242 cannot perform the device access taught in Viswanathan (see Appeal Brief, p, 7, last paragraph – p. 8, line 12).

Examiner believes that Applicant has mischaracterized the rationale behind the 35 USC 103(a) claim rejections. Examiner did not assert that it would have been obvious to allow computers connected to the Internet to access the cluster system of Viswanathan by simply tacking on the Internet-connected computers to Viswanathan's cluster (although Pallmann may suggest such a scheme). Rather, Examiner's argument is that Viswanathan's system is essentially using the same scheme as the Internet, and thus it would have been obvious to replace the resource locators taught by Viswanathan with "URLs" as they are known on the Internet, thereby extending the Viswanathan system to encompass Internet URLs in order to allow true "global" access to the devices on the system.

The following analysis describes the similarities between Viswanathan's system and the Internet system. First, the overriding purpose of the Viswanathan system is to

enable users anywhere on a network to access devices on the network (col. 1, lines 12-20). The Internet has the same purpose. Next, Viswanathan describes that one of the nodes on the network maintains a "global file space" which maintains a list of logical names that map to physical names of the network devices (col. 9, lines 1-10). This mapping allows "transparent, global access to the devices 106 by the applications 150" (col. 9, lines 10-12). Such a system is analogous to an Internet domain name server, which transparently maps logical names ("URLs") into physical names ("IP addresses") in order to provide global access to files and devices across the Internet. Also, Viswanathan's system runs on a single cluster of networked computers ("cluster 201," col. 8, line 61). The Internet is a single cluster of computers. Finally, Viswanathan discloses assigning to devices logical names in the form of "/dev/dsk/c0t0d0s0." This is the same hierarchical naming structure given to Internet URLs (i.e. http://www.myschool.edu/student/main.html; see Pallmann, col. 9, lines 44-45).

Given all of these similarities in combination with the ultimate purpose of Viswanathan to enable users anywhere on a network to access devices on the network, it would have been obvious to adapt the resource locator naming features taught by Viswanathan to be used with Internet URLs, in order to provide access to networked devices from anywhere in the world. Pallmann supports this argument. Pallmann describes that network devices are assigned URLs for global access (col. 8, lines 30-67, describing targets and sources across the Internet; col. 9, lines 43-47, describing the URLs). Pallmann further teaches that "URLs" can be used to access local files, files on a local area network, or files "just about anywhere in the world" (col. 8, lines 18-29).

Thus, given this knowledge, a person looking at the Viswanathan and Pallmann references together would have readily recognized both the desirability and the capability of extending the perhaps limited "global" network system taught by Viswanathan to encompass the true "global" network system of the Internet, as suggested and taught by Pallmann. Therefore, despite Applicant's contention to the contrary, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to adapt the system taught by Viswanathan for use with Internet URLs, as taught by Pallmann.

2. With regard to claims 3 and 19, Applicant contends that Viswanathan in view of Pallmann does not teach or suggest "including configuration information in one or more URLs; wherein the configuration information is operable to be used for configuring the respective data source or data target." Applicant argues that the data taught by Viswanathan simply identifies a device and is not used for configuring the device (see Appeal Brief, p. 10, lines 9-14). Examiner respectfully disagrees. Note that the claim language does not require that the configuration information is directly entered into source or target software to configure the source or target. It merely states that the configuration information is "operable to be used for configuring the respective data source or data target." Thus the identifying logical names taught by Viswanathan are in fact the configuration information – they describe the name configuration of the devices (see, e.g. col. 15, lines 10-22, showing the logical names of various devices). Furthermore, the names are operable to be used to configure the device because they

are used to access and control the devices, which will change their configuration. See col. 5, lines 54-62, describing access and control of devices.

3. With regard to claims 5, 22, and 24, Applicant contends that there is no teaching or suggestion in Viswanathan regarding a database that includes information regarding addressable data sources and targets of a device, and that names taught by Viswanathan do not relate to individual addressable data sources and targets of a device. Examiner respectfully disagrees. Notably, col. 14, lines 20-24 describes that the address names designate both the device (i.e. "node_202-x" and the target or source within that device (i.e. "sbus"). Thus the database described in Viswanathan including the physical names of the sources and targets will include the claimed information.

4. With regard to claims 6, 23, 25, and 53, Applicant contends that Viswanathan does not disclose that device information includes device configuration information obtained from a database, and that the device configuration information is used to generate the name identifying the sources or targets. Examiner respectfully disagrees. Notably, col. 7, lines 40-50 discloses this feature, where it is stated, "The present invention also incorporates a device configuration system (DCS) hosted on one of the cluster nodes that maintains a persistent DCS database listing for each device in the cluster the device name, a major number of the device driver that manages the logical device, the global minor number and a hostid of the node hosting the logical device.

The DDI generates the globally unique identifier, the logical name and the physical name for each logical device based on the assistance of the DCS, which, using the DCS database, generates the global minor numbers for each of the devices on behalf of the DDI."

5. With regard to claims 7, 18, 47, and 50, Applicant contends that neither Viswanathan nor Pallmann disclose the use of DAQ, GPIB, VXI, PXI, and serial interfaces. Examiner agrees, but would like to point out that the final rejection did not assert that either reference disclosed the DAQ, GPIB, VXI, PXI, and serial interfaces. Rather, the final rejection asserted that Applicant's admitted prior art disclosed that including those devices in a network and assigning URLs to those devices is well known (see p. 2, line 26 – p. 3, line 13 of Applicant's specification, describing these features as prior art). Thus, given this knowledge, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art to extend the combined Internet device access system taught by Viswanathan and Pallmann to include DAQ, GPIB, etc. devices so that users can control all devices on the network from anywhere on the network.

6. With regard to claims 8, 26, and 27, Applicant contends that neither Viswanathan nor Pallmann teach or suggest that querying a database comprises querying a first database to obtain device information regarding the first device and querying a second database to obtain device information regarding the second device. Examiner agrees that the references do not explicitly describe using two separate databases, but

maintains the assertion that it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the database art to split the single database into two separate databases because such a structure allows faster lookup time and will improve the speed of system performance. Applicant argues that Examiner has failed to appreciate the significance of the features recited in claim 8 as they relate to page 4 of the present application, because page 4 describes using plug-in modules, wherein "each of the plug-in modules may query a hardware database or other type of database, as appropriate to the plug-in type, to determine information regarding the data sources/targets...." (see Appeal Brief, pp. 14-15). This argument is unpersuasive for two reasons. First, the claim does not include the specific language mentioned on page 4. Although the claims are to be read in view of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993). Second, this cited portion fails to mention a first database for a first device and a second database for a second device. Instead, it simply states that "each of the plug-in modules may query a hardware database or other type of database."

7. With regard to claim 9, Applicant contends that neither Viswanathan nor Pallmann disclose connecting a new device to the computer, wherein said querying comprises obtaining device information regarding the new device. Applicant essentially argues that querying the database for name information that will be used to name the device does not constitute "obtaining device information regarding the new device" because "it is only after the global minor number has been assigned to the new device

being added to the cluster that information regarding the new device is added to the DCS database." Examiner respectfully disagrees with this argument. The claim language only requires obtaining from the database "device information regarding the new device." The name that will be used for the device certainly constitutes device information regarding the device. Note, the claim language does not require obtaining device information *previously associated* with the device. It merely requires obtaining information regarding the device. The name information that is used to name the device fits this requirement.

8. With regard to claims 12, 30, 34, and 57, Applicant contends that Pallmann does not disclose the concept of an application program that includes a data socket client, because in the present claims, the term "data socket client" clearly refers to the data socket client disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,370,569 based on p. 6 of Applicant's specification, which states "In the preferred embodiment, the URLs generated by the present invention are used in conjunction with the Data Socket system disclosed in U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/185,161 [since issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,370,569]." This argument is unpersuasive. As discussed above, limitations from the specification shall not be read into the claims. Therefore, features only described in a related patent application mentioned merely as used in conjunction with the preferred embodiment of the invention also cannot be read into the claims. Applicant has not claimed the data socket system taught by the 6,370,569 patent, so Examiner will not read the claim as including those features.

Applicant further contends that Examiner's statement that a data socket is inherent in using a browser to access a target or source via entry of http commands is erroneous. Examiner respectfully disagrees with this argument as well. Notably, Newton's Telecom Dictionary, 15th Edition (1999) defines "socket" as "1. A synonym for a port; 2. A technology that serves as the endpoint when computers communicate with each other; 4. An operating system abstraction which provides the capability for application programs to automatically access communication protocols. Developed as part of the early work on TCP/IP." These definitions demonstrate that a "data socket" is necessary to allow http communications over the Internet. Thus the use of a browser to affect operations on the Internet constitutes the claimed "data socket client."

9. Regarding claim 13, Applicant contends that neither Viswanathan nor Pallmann disclose that the URLs are accessible via a user interface. Examiner respectfully disagrees. The combined teaching of Viswanathan and Pallmann disclose the use of Internet URLs to access sources and targets on a network, as described in Viswanathan, col. 11, lines 46-48 describing an application program being used to access the named devices, and Pallmann, col. 9, describing the use of browsers to allow entry of particular URLs.

10. Regarding claim 14, Applicant contends that neither Viswanathan nor Pallmann disclose that the URLs are operable to be provided to application programs via said user interface. Examiner respectfully disagrees. The combination of Viswanathan and

Pallmann discloses the use of Internet URLs to access sources and targets on a network. These URLs will inherently be operable to be provided to application programs (i.e. browsers) via a user interface (i.e. the browser window). See Viswanathan, col. 11, lines 46-48; Pallmann, col. 8, lines 30-49, col. 9, describing that the users may access a target or source by entering the name/URL into an application.

11. Regarding claim 15, Applicant contends that neither Viswanathan nor Pallmann disclose editing the URLs using said user interface. For the same reasons stated with regard to points 9 and 10 above, Examiner respectfully disagrees. Notably, col. 9 of Pallmann specifically describes using a browser to enter URLs, wherein typing in the URLs would constitute editing them.

12. Regarding claim 28, Applicant contends that neither Viswanathan nor Pallmann disclose that the system further comprises computer programs executable to edit the generated URLs or editing the URLs using the executable program. Examiner respectfully disagrees. Col. 9 of Pallmann specifically describes using a browser to enter URLs, wherein typing in the URLs would constitute editing them. Col. 15, lines 10-22 of Viswanathan discloses that the logical names/URLs contain configuration information (i.e. the name of the device is part of its configuration information).

13. Regarding claims 40 and 46, Applicant contends that Viswanathan does not disclose querying a database to obtain information regarding the identified one or more

hardware devices, and automatically generating the one or more URLs for each of the one or more hardware devices based the obtained information. Examiner respectfully disagrees. Notably, Viswanathan discloses this feature in col. 10, lines 1-15; col. 11, lines 26-65, which describes the process of naming devices based on information culled from the device.

14. Regarding claim 41, Applicant contends that neither Viswanathan nor Pallmann disclose that the device is a data acquisition device wherein the obtained information specifies a number of channels of the data acquisition device. As a preliminary matter, note that the phrase "obtained information" is ambiguous because it is not supported with antecedent basis. Furthermore, Viswanathan obtaining information about a number of slices of a SCSI disk, which is analogous to obtaining a number of channels of a data acquisition device (see Viswanathan, col. 11, lines 52-65). The SCSI disk will acquire data and is thus a data acquisition device.

15. Regarding claim 42, Applicant contends that Viswanathan does not disclose that the obtained information specifies characteristics of at least one channel of the data acquisition device. Examiner respectfully disagrees, as the characteristic is that the channel is a SCSI disk channel (col. 11, lines 52-65).

16. Regarding claim 44, Applicant presents a similar argument as with regard to claim 41, and thus Examiner relies on the argument presented with regard to claim 41 to rebut this argument.

For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejections should be sustained.

Respectfully submitted,

Bradley Edelman
April 21, 2005

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